

tribute to the life and passing of Dean Gray, a resident of Grand Junction, Colorado. For three years Dean volunteered at KAFM radio, a station that showcased his musical passion, jazz. Dean's hard work and dedication to KAFM made him a popular presence at the station, as he provided exemplary leadership and friendship to the other employees. I am honored to speak of the accomplishments of Dean before this body of Congress and this nation here today.

Dean and his wife Jean moved to the Grand Junction area 10 years ago, relocating from the jazz-rich city of Chicago. Chicago provided an ideal atmosphere for jazz connoisseurs, offering a variety of clubs, concerts, and musicians that are based in that area. The couple's passion for jazz grew, and when they arrived in Grand Junction, they immediately tuned to KAFM Community Radio. As a retired member of the community, Dean wanted to expand his involvement in the jazz world. This passion for music led Dean to volunteer as a programmer for KAFM, and his hard work and dedication landed him his own show on Sunday mornings. Dean was an instant hit; he was happiest when listeners called in, telling him how much they enjoyed the show. The station appreciated Dean's dedication so much that he was recently honored with a party and plaque thanking him for his hard work at the station.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened by the loss of such a kind and caring individual. Dean's commitment, compassion, and hard work garnered him respect at KAFM, and it is for those very qualities that I bring his life to the attention of my colleagues here today. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Dean Gray.

HONORING ROBERT AND MARGUERITE STEELE AS "PARENTS OF THE YEAR"

HON. DAVID L. HOBSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert and Marguerite Steele who reside in Xenia, Ohio in the 7th Congressional District, who have received the "Parents of the Year" Award for 2003 by the National Parents' Day Council.

Mr. and Mrs. Steele have worked very hard to be both responsible parents to their children, while helping the larger "family" of the local community.

Robert Steele has served in the military and is active with the local American Legion. Through his work with the Legion, the couple has instituted community programs for the less fortunate, where area children can participate in life-enhancing and educational activities. The Steeles' outreach efforts have helped bring about better cooperation and understanding between racial groups in the community.

This honor exemplifies Robert and Marguerite's commitment to strengthening the concept of family, which we Americans value above virtually all other things. Their community work and involvement in the lives their own children are ample justification for this award.

As the Congressman who represents Xenia, Ohio in the U.S. House of Representatives, I

offer my sincere congratulations to Robert and Marguerite Steele for this achievement. It is an honor to recognize their outstanding leadership and the exemplary character they have shown as parents.

TRIBUTE TO GLADYS McBEE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress and this nation today to pay tribute to the passing of a woman from my district who spent a lifetime in the service of others. Gladys McBee of Durango, Colorado recently passed away, and as her friends and loved ones mourn their loss, I would like to recognize a few of her many achievements here today.

Born in La Plata in 1917, Gladys settled in Durango where she became well known in the community for her enthusiastic involvement in numerous causes. She helped establish the Durango and LaPlata Senior Center and spent 20 years working with seniors at the San Juan Area Agency on Aging. As a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the League of Women Voters, Gladys helped foster patriotism and educate others of our nation's unique heritage. She continued these efforts through numerous articles about the Constitution and Bill of Rights for her local newspaper, the Durango Herald. Many people in Durango also knew Gladys for her extensive involvement in water issues and the Animas Museum, Durango's only history museum.

Mr. Speaker, Gladys McBee continually worked to improve the lives of others, and she is certainly deserving of praise before this body today. She is survived by her sister Aileen, son Douglas, grandson Teddy and other extended family members. Our thoughts are with them during their time of bereavement. To her family, friends, and the many people in the community who knew her, Gladys McBee will be deeply missed.

RAUL RIVERO MUST NOT DIE IN CASTRO'S PRISONS

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Raul Rivero is the dean of independent journalism in Cuba, having founded in 1995 Cuba Press, a news agency for independent journalists in Cuba. Mr. Rivero is also a world acclaimed poet and writer. His articles have appeared in publications such as The Chicago Tribune and The Washington Post. He has been recognized by such prestigious organizations as Reporters Without Borders. However, in totalitarian Cuba, Mr. Rivero is banned from publishing. In fact, the Castro regime is so threatened by Mr. Rivero's writing that in March Castro sent his thugs to his home to arrest him and 75 other dissidents and subsequently sentenced Mr. Rivero to 20 years in prison.

In 1991 Mr. Rivero, along with 10 other intellectuals, signed a petition to the Castro re-

gime calling for the liberation of all prisoners of conscience. Of the 10 signatories Mr. Rivero is the only one still living in Cuba and now finds himself in Castro's gulag for simply daring to write in his own country. Mr. Rivero must not die in Castro's prisons. Mr. Rivero and all political prisoners must be liberated now!

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2691) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment offered by my friend from Colorado, MARK UDALL.

My colleagues, the reason we have so many funding limitation amendments to this bill is not because of the actions of Chairman TAYLOR and the Appropriations Committee in general. It's because the congressional leadership has abdicated its institutional obligations to carry out its oversight responsibilities. And, nowhere is this abdication of responsibility more prominent than in the arena of the environment.

I can understand from some in the west that the federal government owns too much land and that these states should have the first right of refusal. But let's redefine who exactly the federal government is. It's the people of the United States and it's their land. The stewardship responsibilities for these lands, these national parks, wildlife refuges, national forests, monuments and wilderness areas are the federal government's in accordance with the laws this institution has adopted in the name of all Americans and with their support. But when an administration disregards a moratorium directed by Congress and proceeds to use an obscure reinterpretation of an arcane mining law to carve up by roads some of America's great treasured landscapes and scenic lands, it has gone too far.

Earlier this year, the Department of Interior amended an existing rule to facilitate right-of-way claims under Revised Statute 2477 (RS 2477), a long ago repealed provision of the Mining Law of 1866. The new regulation will allow any entity to file claims against federal lands, yet the new rule lacks any standard for determining the legitimacy of these claims. As a result of this and other changes, the amended disclaimer rule is being used to establish thousands of new roads potentially through National Parks, Refuges, Forests and Monuments or candidate wilderness sites without even proving any actual need.

You've seen the pictures. Find a footpath, a donkey trail and you can undermine the people's and this nation's expressed desire to protect this land from development and the extraction industry. You say it is not happening, or maybe it is just limited to Utah. Think again.

San Bernardino County in California has actively begun surveying specific routes and mapping claims. This process is 80 percent complete and the county has thus far claimed 4,986 miles, 2,567 of which are in the Mojave National Preserve. The county has requested the Department of Interior waive the \$100 filing fee because they have so many RS 2477 claims the cost to the county to file all of these claims would be prohibitive. I am puzzled how they may lack the money to file these claims, but will somehow find the money to build all these roads?

I doubt more than a fraction of these claims will ever give rise to a road, but the claims will prove sufficient to block federal, state and local efforts to protect the land these road claims bisect. Mr. Chairman, what the public would never support through legislation, the administration is doing by stealth. And, while these actions may succeed at removing these lands from federal protection, they will create a host of new liabilities and unfunded costs.

In some states, including California and New Mexico, state law makes the local jurisdictions liable for failure to maintain a roadway. I wonder what future lawsuits we may be inviting when these localities will be sued for injuries caused by hazardous conditions on roads that were never built?

Given the tens of thousands of claims that have been received, I fail to see corresponding increases in the Bureau of Land Management's budget to process them. Will the granting of rights-of-way, create any new financial obligations for the federal government? What costs, including environmental assessments and litigation might be involved?

Mr. Chairman, this policy is an abomination. The administration needs to be reigned in and the purse strings are all that we have available. Support the Udall amendment.

IN HONOR OF THE AMERICAN
MERCHANT MARINE FOR A JOB
WELL DONE DURING OPERATION
IRAQI FREEDOM

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the members of the American Merchant Marine for exemplary service to our country during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our nation owes them a debt of gratitude for delivering goods and keeping our troops supplied during a very trying time. Without the Merchant Marines, our armed forces would have faced insurmountable obstacles during their mission in the Persian Gulf.

Our maritime industry accounted for more than 80 percent of the supplies that were moved into Kuwait and Qatar for use in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Over 5000 mariners, from midshipmen to seasoned licensed marine officers, took part in the massive effort. They braved the seas in unarmed vessels full of explosive cargoes, and even volunteered to take anthrax and smallpox vaccinations to protect against biological attack. They moved nearly 21 million square feet of cargo in four

months—the equivalent, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers stated, of shipping everything in the Pentagon three times.

On May 22, 2003, Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta said, "There is no more devoted a community of professionals than those who serve our nation's marine transportation system." I wholeheartedly agree with this statement. Since the founding of our great nation, the men and women of our maritime industry have shown great dedication to the ideals on which America was founded.

In peacetime, and in wartime, our maritime industry provides the vital lines of communications that keep our manufacturers producing, our farmers growing, and our consumers buying. Without the Merchant Marines, the American economy would grind to a screeching halt.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the important contributions made by our Merchant Mariners and their unwavering commitment to America's freedom and prosperity. Participation in the most recent war in Iraq is just another example of our Merchant Marine's dedication to our nation.

RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED
CAREER OF GENE VERDU, EXEC-
UTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH-
WESTERN ILLINOIS COLLEGE
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR
OLDER PERSONS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished career and retirement of Gene Verdu, Executive Director of the Southwestern Illinois College Programs and Services for Older Persons (PSOP).

August 31, 2003, will mark the end of an era of dedicated service as Eugene "Gene" Verdu retires from his position as the Executive Director of PSOP. Gene has dedicated his life to helping others. Throughout his 30-year career, he has touched the lives of thousands of people as he built and developed one of the finest social service agencies in the State of Illinois. From Belleville to Belize, Gene's generosity, passion and spirit have had a positive impact on family, friends, colleagues and constituents. His visionary leadership and tireless efforts to constantly improve the lives of others will be missed.

Throughout his career, Gene has served people, first as a teacher from 1963–1968. Moving from teaching young people to serving the needs of the elderly, Gene became the Director of the local Foster Grandparent Program in 1968 and served in that position until 1973. In 1973, Gene became the Director of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and served in that position until he was named the Director of the PSOP in 1975.

While serving our area's senior citizen population, Gene developed one of the first comprehensive "Preparation for Retirement" courses and educational materials. He orga-

nized and administered local Foster Grandparent programs, the Senior Companion Program, Senior Nutrition and Development programs, as well as Senior Transportation programs. Gene also developed, organized and taught several statewide training seminars related to the subject of aging and established one of the first electronic telephone reassurance programs for the homebound elderly.

Gene served as a delegate to the 1971, 1981, and 1995 White House Conferences on Aging and served on national committees for the American Association of Retired Persons, the National Council on Aging and the National Council of Senior Citizens. He assisted the State of Illinois by organizing the Illinois State Council of Senior Citizens and lobbying the state to create the Department on Aging. Gene also helped establish the Illinois Gerontology Consortium.

Gene has been the recipient of many community awards, among them the Medal of Merit by the Belleville Rotary Club, the Studs Terkel Humanitarian Award, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award and the Outstanding Administrator Award from Belleville Area College. He has also received the Distinguished Community Service Award from St. Clair County and the Liberty Bell Award from the St. Clair County Bar Association.

Through Gene's work as the Director of PSOP, the elderly of the community are treated with respect and dignity. Their needs are met by the services PSOP offers: congregate meals, meals delivered to homebound elderly, transportation, employment, companionship, workshops and activities, travel opportunities, wellness clinic, volunteer opportunities, advocacy, counseling, outreach programs, and more. Recently, I was happy to work with Gene to secure more than \$900,000 to help finance the construction of an addition to the PSOP building at 201 North Church Street.

In addition to his work with the elderly, Gene still has a place in his heart for children. He continues to touch the lives of young handicapped children through the Belize Crippled Children's Program. He spends much of his spare time promoting this program, recruiting host families for the children who receive medical treatment at Shriner's Hospital in St. Louis, arranging travel to and from Belize for the children, and often escorting them himself, and traveling to Belize to assist with the medical clinics which are held to select the children for the program.

As a result of his many years of dedication to the Belize Crippled Children's Program, he was appointed Honorary Consul of Belize for the Greater St. Louis/Southern Illinois Area and serves as Secretary-Treasurer to the St. Louis Consular Corps.

If a person, no matter what age, race, or religion, is in need, Gene will lend a helping hand. If there is a situation that needs correcting to benefit others, he will fight to correct it.

The PSOP program helps approximately 12,000 seniors every year and he has helped hundreds of children through the Belize Crippled Children's Program. His life has made a definite impact on thousands of people, thus making the world a better place. Gene Verdu is a true humanitarian.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the contributions of Gene Verdu and wish him the best in the future.